



**JOHN GRIFFITH**  
**"GRIF" JOHNSON,**

## OF COUNSEL

[LinkedIn](#) [Email](#) [Awards](#)

Grif has been practicing law for more than four decades in the field of the federal government's regulation of mass media service providers, especially radio and television broadcasters. His clients have included both commercial and public station group owners, as well as institutional sources of capital to the broadcasting industry, encompassing commercial banks, investment banks, hedge funds, private equity funds, venture capital firms, and underwriters of securities offerings. He has also assisted clients whose operations aren't directly regulated by the Federal Communications Commission or by other federal agencies, but whose interests are vitally affected by such regulation. Grif has worked extensively with clients in navigating both the Congressional and the administrative layers of governmental oversight of mass media. In addition, he has participated in numerous proceedings before the federal judiciary in challenging or defending new or modified regulatory initiatives.

### EDUCATION

Georgetown University Law Center, J.D., Deans List; Editor, Georgetown Law Journal, 1976

Princeton University, A.B., Summa Cum Laude; Phi Beta Kappa, 1972

### PRIOR EXPERIENCE

Partner, Paul Hastings LLP, 1996-2010

Partner, Bryan Cave LLP, 1987-1996

Partner, Kadison, Pfaelzer, Woodard, Quinn & Rossi, 1981-1987

Partner, Jorgensen, Johnson & Northrop, 1977-1981

Associate, Law Offices of Norman E. Jorgensen, 1976-1977

### FUN FACT

Prior to attending law school, Grif worked as a reporter for an international wire service company and was stationed in Richmond, Virginia. In 1973, he was among the first U.S. journalists to interview American former prisoners-of-war who were being released from captivity in what was then North Vietnam and were being processed through the Portsmouth (Virginia) Naval Air Station.

### PRACTICE ADMISSIONS

- District of Columbia Bar
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

### RECENT, REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Grif represented a large national bank in connection with its lead role in a syndicated refinancing of one of the largest radio station groups in the U.S., in connection with the borrower's nearly-simultaneous acquisitions from various sellers of dozens of stations in markets across the country. He advised the client on the borrower, its regulatory history and standing before the FCC; on the borrower's many station acquisition targets; and on the process and outlook for obtaining the FCC's approval of the various station acquisitions. He was also deeply involved in assisting in the negotiation and drafting of the documentation of the loan, the related security agreements, and a partial reorganization of the borrower's ownership structure.
- Grif represented a hedge fund in connection with its provision of bridge financing to a company owning two regional television stations that were being offered in the FCC's recent Incentive Auction. The Incentive Auction involved the FCC's "reverse auction" to purchase the licenses of television stations at prices determined by sequential bidding rounds. The purpose of the Incentive Auction was to enable the FCC to acquire spectrum represented by the television station licenses, and then re-auction that spectrum to providers of wireless communications services. Grif advised the client on the unique and unprecedented design and function of the Incentive Auction, and on the borrower, its stations and their regulatory history and standing. Grif was also active in assisting with the negotiation and drafting of the documentation of the bridge loan and the related security agreements.
- Grif represented a venture capital firm that owned, indirectly through its subsidiaries, a television station whose FCC license renewal and station sale were being challenged before the FCC by a local citizen activist group. He designed and implemented a particularized strategy that resulted in the client's divestiture of its indirect station ownership, so that venture capital firm could be acquired in a friendly transaction without requiring the FCC's approval, which would have been delayed by virtue of the controversy over the station. Grif advised the client on various agreements related to these transactions, including the station sale documentation; the documentation of a cooperative arrangement between the client's subsidiaries' station and another station in the same market; and the documentation of the client's divestiture of its indirect station ownership.